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the shopkeeper and are willing to pay slightly higher prices. They advance money to the people for buying bullocks and agricultural implements. A mortgage is not insisted upon in all cases, but the rate of compound interest which they charge is often exorbitant. The Komtis also advance seed grain to the people. For this, too, they charge a heavy interest. Loans are often taken by people against the mortgage of land or a part of the crops, depending upon the sum of money which they borrow. In Shamirpet the Komtis seem to be the only caste whose monopoly has been seriously affected by the change of times. To-day Shamirpet has in all thirteen shops. If we do not take into account some of the petty shops, four of these belong to Komtis, two to Muslims, two to Toddy-tappers and one to a goldsmith. Even in the field of advancing cash and seeds for agricultural purposes, the Komtis have to face the competition of some of the comparatively rich Reddi and Muslim cultivators.

THE KUMMARI

In Shamirpet there are five families of potters, with fourteen people actually working at the wheel. Each family is attached to some agriculturists in the village, and it periodically supplies them with a certain number of earthen pots for domestic use. Every two or three years they also supply the agriculturists with large baked earthen bins for storing grain. For this they do not expect a cash price. At the time of harvesting the potter visits the fields of the family to which he is attached, and is given *bheek-bali*, that is his share of the new crop. The quantity of grain that is given away depends on the size of the land cultivated, and also partly on the owner's financial circumstances. On the occasion of rituals connected with birth, marriage or death a supply of new pots is expected from him. Tradition has prescribed the minimum payment required for these services, although on happy occasions people often give a little more. If he can arrive at an agreement with the other occupational castes, such as the barber, the washerman and the weaver, he will offer them his services in return for their occupational services to his family. The details are fixed by the parties concerned, and often considerable haggling and making of charges and counter-charges against one another go on. Notwithstanding this, the system works quite satisfactorily, for out of forty-four cases of such mutual arrangements studied very

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ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

THE BRAHMIN

793 791 There is only one Brahmin family in the village. The head of this family enjoys considerable local prestige owing to the fact of his birth, and also because he is a substantial landowner. He is the local priest as well as an astrologer. People consult him regarding the suitability of proposed marriages, and when negotiations are completed they seek his astrological calculations regarding an auspicious date and time for the wedding itself. He officiates at the marriage ceremony among the higher castes. On childbirth he is consulted about the planetary position at the actual time of the baby's birth, and its astrological implications for the child as well as for the parents and the other members of the family. If the reading indicates any difficulty, the Brahmin is often commissioned to offer special worship and perform the necessary rituals to ward off the evil. Similarly, after a death the Brahmin is consulted. If it is found that the time of death was inauspicious the members of the household may be asked to leave the residence temporarily, for a period of three to six months, according to the advice of the Brahmin. These consultations on the occasions of birth and death are generally sought only by the people of higher castes and by those who are well-to-do. Prescribed fees have to be paid to the Brahmin in cash for these consultations. Indirectly, the Brahmin contributes also to the agricultural activities of the community. He advises the agriculturists on when to start sowing at the beginning of the agricultural year. He is also consulted regarding the auspicious dates for starting weeding and harvesting. The date of the New Eating ceremony for the different families in the village is fixed by him. For these consultations no one pays him in cash. He visits the houses of his agriculturist clients fortnightly or once a month, especially in the harvesting season, and is customarily given a certain quantity of grain by each family.

THE KOMTI

564 443 426 The Komtis are traders. They also function as village moneylenders. They keep a permanent small shop at some central point in the village, and also attend the weekly markets in the neighbouring villages. They generally sell provisions for cash, although things may also be bought on credit by those who are known to

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ment. As all the Madiga families in the village are not affiliated to the agriculturists, in these calculations their average income from these sources comes to only 58%, although a few decades ago, when the traditional system worked better, it must have been considerably more. The potters earn much more by selling their earthenware in the markets than by their traditional arrangements with the families of agriculturists. Similarly, some of the washermen have now a clientele in the city. Twice or thrice every month they collect clothes from them, delivering at the same time the previous washing. The barbers have a limited number of clients in the neighbouring villages. All the castes in this group derive an appreciable portion of their total earnings from private work done outside the system of traditional arrangements.

The economy of the village is only partially self-sufficient. The traders, both Komtis and Muslims, buy their goods wholesale from the city and retail them in their shops in the village. People often buy their requirements from the city if they happen to go there. They frequently visit the weekly bazaars also. The weavers buy their spindles from Hyderabad wholesalers, and depend for the sale of their cloth on the cluster of several nearby villages. The customers of the goldsmith are also distributed in several villages of the neighbourhood. The Gaondla produces all the fermented palm-juice required in the settlement from the trees around the village, but he has also to keep a certain quantity of liquor distilled in the city for such customers as may order it occasionally. The occupation of stone-breaking takes the Vaddars to several villages in the neighbourhood where there are no members of their caste. Finally, Madiga families acquiring a reputation for their skill in curing and tanning hides, or in their leather-work, are also commissioned by outsiders occasionally to do some work for them.

231 the Ceded Districts, most of the Panchayats followed the practice of
651 auctioning and that too on a very long term basis like 10 years or 5–10 years as in the case of Panchayats like Dharmavaram and Kadiri in Anantpuram District.

Several Panchayats besides these did not trouble themselves to create the facility of a slaughter house at all. Only a few minor Panchayats provided slaughter houses. (column 14.)

●[443] **Market Fees:** Public markets held in the Panchayat areas
651 were usually of three types : daily, bi-weekly and weekly. The rates and the goods on which they should be imposed and collected were to be decided by the Panchayats while the process and actual collection was left to auction bidders who did the work of collecting these fees by issuing licence chits at the rates prescribed by the Panchayat Boards. Instances where Panchayats themselves did the job of collection of these were hardly observable anywhere. Market collections were usually auctioned once a year to the highest bidder and he paid the amount in lump sum to the Panchayat.

The market fees and the variety of goods on which they were imposed varied from Panchayat to Panchayat, irrespective of differences and similarities in grade or place.

In Anantapur, the Guntakal and Kadiri Panchayats charged at a rate of 2 annas to dealers of necessities like salt, tamarind, chillies, tobacco, oil, fuel and potatoes, whereas rates varied between 2 and 4 annas in respect of other commodities like fruits, sweetmeat, vegetable, fish and even retail and grain shops. Truck loads were charged at 6 to 8 annas.

These differences were common not only to all major Panchayats, either in the Circars or the Ceded Districts, but, the same was the case even in the markets of minor Panchayats which had public markets as in Valluru, Yeditha, Kapileswarapuram, etc. in East Godavari District, Aravalli and Vasadi in West Godavari District, Gudur in Kistna District and Kothavalasa in Vizagapatam District. (colomn 10)

Again, the collection of the market fees from cattle, vegetable, grain and fruit markets were not always left for the use of the Panchayats, but the District Boards shared these proceeds and very often took the lion's share without any corresponding return to the Panchayat area in which these collections were earned. The share

Panchayats surveyed had two slaughter houses each, one for sheep and the other for cattle and in a large number of cases, they were auctioned out rather than managed by Panchayat itself. 231

A significant irregularity in this instance was the twofold practice i. e. departmental management versus leasing out to private bidders. While the authorities of Local Boards desired departmental management of collection of receipts and supervision, some Panchayats had been evading this method for long by handing it over to private auctioneers with impunity and the Local Board Officials did nothing to check this growing practice especially more prevalent in the Ceded Districts than in the Northern Circars. Similarly they did nothing to enforce this obligation in many Panchayats which did nothing beyond the provision for construction of slaughter houses and passing resolutions to that effect in their meetings.

Parks: Parks were intended to cater to the recreation facilities of the public in the area of the Panchayat as it was one of its obligatory duties. 367 207

But the survey revealed no enthusiastic observance of this obligation even in the best and economically capable Panchayats. Most of the major Panchayats were practically negligent about it though a few 2nd and 3rd grade Panchayats and occasionally a minor Panchayat here and there had taken up this matter seriously. In East Godavari, Razole Panchayat had beautiful park with radio for listeners, while Panchayats like Nidadavol and Tanuku in West Godavari had only radios with loud speakers for listeners' convenience. In the Ceded Districts, Dharmavaram in Anantpur, Kampli in Bellary, Maddikera in Kurnool, and Yellamanchili in Vizagapatam District had nice parks while the majority of other major Panchayats had only radio sets. Most of the Minor Panchayats had no parks, except in stray cases as Achanta in East Godavari.

Public Markets: Construction of public markets was another of the obligatory duties of the Panchayats and was observed more in the breach than in practice. Though almost every major and minor Panchayat got a regular revenue from the vendors who got their goods for offering for sale, they were left to the mercies of sun and rain without the Panchayats ever bothering about providing them with any sort of regular permanent or semi-permanent sheds 443

443 where they could sit and deal in their goods. The anxiety of Panchayats to auction their market receipts to the highest bidder would never go further enough to make them realise their concomittant responsibilities for this fruitful source of income and those who contributed to it. The sheds were provided for in Attili and Akividu in West Godavari, Razole in East Godavari, and Dharmavaram in Anantapur. These were only rare exceptions rather than the rule in each and every district. If that was the situation in major Panchayats, the minor Panchayats could not naturally do more.

764 **Burning and Burial Grounds—Construction and Maintenance :** Practically very few Panchayats seemed to be doing anything towards this obligation. Except in a few places like, Tanuku and Bhimavaram in West Godavari, and Amalapuram in East Godavari, most of the other Panchayats did not reveal recurrent attention or expenditure on this item which was one of their obligatory duties.

While informal enquiries made in Panchayats visited, revealed an abiding interest in this matter, there was no regular expenditure incurred on this item. None of the Panchayats usually provided pendals or some erections to give shade to those who had to go there. Neither the Panchayats nor their supervisory staff ever seemed to have insisted on the careful observance of this obligation.

365 **Night Lighting in Streets :** Provision of lights for the convenience of the passers-by in the streets in villages was done in most of the Panchayats. They were either kerosene or petromax, gas or electric lights. Where there was no electricity, the number of lights compared to pre-war times had been less. Except in some places where either the Panchayat was superseded or the Panchayat was in no way able to meet this obligation, the lighting facilities were always provided either it was a 1st, 2nd or 3rd grade Panchayat. The situation in the minor Panchayats was a bit different and most of them were not able to provide this facility, not so much because they could not afford it, but beacuse there was no effective power to enforce this obligation.

The following table gives the numbet of lights now used and existed prior to the rationing of kerosene oil.

auctioned, while Government wanted them to be departmentally managed. 231

Parks for the public recreation were constructed only in a few Panchayats while the majority were indifferent. 967

Similarly market sites where fees were collected on sale of vegetables, grains or animals were mostly without stalls or sheds to shelter the sellers and buyers and the goods offered for sale. 443

Burning and burial grounds were not properly maintained either in the major or minor Panchayats. 764

Street lighting undertaken only by a few major Panchayats was left mostly to contractors who would light the streets hardly for a few hours. Panchayats did not undertake this task directly as they thought it was difficult to control and check the pilfering of kerosene oil, lights, wicks, burners, chimneys, etc. The remedy for that would be to get standardised and stamped goods for the use of Panchayats from Government Stores and to punish offenders mercilessly than to leave this function to the mercy of the contractors who would only be keen to charge the highest rates than giving proper service. 365

Provision of libraries and newspapers was undertaken only by very few Panchayats either due to lack of funds or sufficient interest. 217

Management of fairs and festivals was done by a few minor or major Panchayats, but, without exploiting their privileged position by means of a pilgrim tax or a tax on the vendors. 543

Optional functions like plantation of trees, provision of cart and bus stands, radio sets for listeners, help in epidemics, provision of dispensaries, etc. were done only by very few Panchayats. 623

The attendance of the members at the meetings of Panchayats was so irregular that there was often no quorum. Sometimes the Panchayats held no meetings at all for a long time or the members absented themslves continuously without any action being taken against them.

Panchayats were superseded and special officers were appointed to administer them for a year or two, when Panchayats could not work properly either due to local factions or opposition to taxation or any other undesirable features. Fresh Panchayat was ushered in only after the prevailing irregularities were removed and when the prospects of its smooth working were tolerably certain. 687 623